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WHAT MAY BE EXPECTED FROM PHILIPPINE EDUCATION?

By David P. Barrows, Ph.D., Recently Director of Education in the Philippines.

The opening of American markets to their products is unquestionably bringing a new era of business prosperity to the Philippines. The governor general has announced recently that for the fiscal year ending June 30th, the sum of imports and exports exceeds by \$17,000,000 the commerce of the previous year. Everywhere there is increased industrial activity. The present administration is laying great emphasis on the material development of the islands; many millions of pesos have been spent for roads; other millions for permanent buildings, for harbor improvements, for the beautification of Manila. Newly constructed railroads are operating. Added exertions are being made for the suppression of human and animal disease. The peace which has obtained in practically all parts of the archipelago since 1906 continues unbroken. Yet this prosperity is not a solution of the Philippine problem, nor do these economic successes, striking as they are, meet the real expectations of the people themselves. Neither will this business activity, if unsupported by other agencies, insure a general diffusion of well-being.

The Philippines have been prosperous before. There were long periods under Spanish rule, when trade rapidly increased, when each year added new areas to productive cultivation, when settlers and adventurers from Spain crowded to the islands, and yet the real social needs of the people were not met, the social discontent was not changed, and revolution was not averted. No mere economic policy is adequate to the growing aspirations of such a race as the Filipino. There is something yet far more difficult to supply and that is a

legitimate outlet for the restlessness and ambition of an awakened and passionate people; something else far harder to preserve than business prosperity, and that is understanding and accord between this dependent people and their political masters.

The most pressing problems of the twentieth century are those occasioned by racial contact and collision. Over a large part of the earth, the white man is master of the political fortunes of the backward and dependent peoples of other races, but it is doubtful if he can longer generally maintain his superior position except by generous concessions. The future is full of trouble and will tax the capacities of the white race as perhaps they have never been taxed before. Toward the close of the last century there was a general feeling that the dependent peoples were to remain indefinitely dependent, their just treatment and material well-being assured by the control of the colonial nations of Europe. The marked success of the British Empire at the end of the century had much to do with establishing this confidence and at least one attempt to state this expectation in scientific terms was made by a British writer, Mr. Benjamin Kidd. It was assumed that the temper of dependent races would remain submissive and that they would be ever content under the economic advantages of the white man's rule.

That this view was devoid of statesmanship and of that rare but certain sense for future change, is clear now after the passage of a single decade. Over great countries where it was thought that the natives would remain docile indefinitely, there now prevail discontent and the menace of rebellion. The Mohammedan world which seemed politically enfeebled past hopes of recovery, has renewed its strength and is pregnant with great change. There is an uneasy consciousness that colonial policies that seemed securely planted on a century of success, now have no certain future. There are few advocates of repression. Lord Morley's recent *Indian Speeches* reflect the wiser attitude that seeks to concede, because it sees that concession is necessary, just and generous.

It is this present shifting of policies, that makes the history of the European administration of the Philippines significant. The Spanish failure has its lesson and that lesson must be seen by other colonial nations or the failure will be repeated elsewhere. What Spain faced in the Philippines during the last decades of her rule, other powers with dependent peoples must face also in these early decades of the present century.

For 333 years, Spaniards governed the Philippines, and in some ways with a high degree of success and a minimum of oppression. The occupation of the Philippines came at the close of the active period of Spanish conquest and it had the benefit of more than seventy years of experience in America. Two generations of Spaniards had borne the costs of discovery and conquest, and they had learned much, when in 1565, Legazpi set sail from Mexico for the Philippines. There had been a reaction against the brutality that marked the conquest of the Antilles and occasioned the extermination of the Indians. Innumerable passages in the laws of the Indies indicate that the Spanish conscience was solicitous and troubled. Las Casas was still alive in the convent of his order in Valladolid. This, and the different attitude of the natives, freed the conquest of the Philippines from the violence and misfortune witnessed in America and made possible the early establishment of a paternal and beneficent policy. This policy treated the native as a ward and for centuries contemplated no other status for him. The natives increased in numbers, in civilization and on the whole in well-being. Until near the middle of the century the relationship between the natives and the missionaries who were their immediate governors seemed well-nigh ideal to many writers who described the Philippines as they were before 1850. Then Spain's policy suddenly became inadequate. It had neglected the education of the native, even when admitted to holy orders; it did not tolerate the growth of native leadership; it was hostile to every influence coming from the outside world. It sought to keep the Philippines a closed vessel, dedicated to the Church.

But the opening of the islands to foreign trade, the arrival

of Spaniards of secular pursuits, the reverberation in the Philippines of the clamorous revolutions in Spain, then the opening of the Suez Canal and the entrance of a host of disturbing ideas made impossible the old paternal régime of the friars, and Spain failed in the courage and will to carry through a policy of reform. Spain did not wholly lack liberal statesmen, as creditable legislative reforms of the last decades of her rule show, but they were unequal to accomplish the complete change of policy which alone would have been adequate to preserve the sovereignty of Spain. Public education of natives was provided after 1860, a measure of local government conceded, the "assimilation policy" was advocated by some, as was representation in the Cortés, but the influence of the Church was thrown heavily against all this advance and the result was reaction and rebellion. The policy of sympathy and concession recommended by a small number of Spanish statesmen was defeated by those who despised Filipino capacity, and saw in its every development a menace to their own authority. Spain's experience shows that no amount of material advantage, and no sense of past benefits conferred will hold the allegiance of a subject people permeated with liberal ideas and conscious that it is being repressed and intimidated from following the line of its natural advancement.

When in 1898, the government of the Philippines passed to our hand we inherited a revolution that had been in progress for many years; Filipino leaders were flushed with their successes, confident that nationality could be won and resolute that the period of disturbance and warfare should not end until their rights were secure. The governments of the British and Dutch colonies of Malaysia offered no precedents for us to follow in this situation, for it was entirely different from anything over which British or Dutch rule has been successful. Only a policy of conciliation and sincere friendliness to Filipino aspirations had any hope of success. Fortunately the elements of such a policy were found in the plan to which the American instinctively turned—native education. This national feeling for schools was shown strikingly in the attitude of the army even while engaged in the

work of subjugation. Schools were reopened in every part of the archipelago and their work cared for with intelligence and solicitude by military men. During those dreadful and perplexing months of 1900 and the early part of 1901, officers commanding the garrisons of towns in all parts of the archipelago manifested their belief in a policy of native conciliation by the warmest support and advocacy of education.

With the organization of civil government by the Taft Commission, education was made the main feature of the administration. The Bureau of Education was organised by law in January, 1901, and the engagement of a thousand American teachers was in response to the requests of Filipinos who appeared before the Commission in public discussion of the bill and pleaded for native enlightenment. It is its attitude toward schools and the intellectual development of the natives that actually determines the character of a colonial policy at the present day. In its emphasis on education the Taft Commission really established a new standard in the relations of a colonial government and its subject population. Nor has the government ever had reason to repent of its attitude toward education. When in 1903, Mr. Taft left Manila for Washington, he declared that above all other efforts that had contributed to the success of his policy, was the work and influence of the American teacher.

Ten years have now passed since the educational policy of the United States in the Philippines was started, and it is possible to begin to estimate some of its results and to decide where that policy now stands and what can be said for its future.

No one can deny that the Filipino has made a most magnificent response to the opportunities of schooling held out to him. From one end of the archipelago to the other, there has been and continues to be a passionate desire for education. Towns have vied with one another in their sacrifices for schools and in the erection of school buildings. Advocacy of schools is an almost indispensable pre-election pledge, and school support is the basis of many a town official's claim of public usefulness. The application of the proceeds of taxation to schools has more than once saved the government's

financial legislation from complete unpopularity; in one year over 265,000 pesos was voluntarily contributed to supplement the public revenue of the schools. The Philippine Assembly inaugurated in 1907 has further expressed the wide popular support of education. Of the 75 bills passed at the first sessions of the first Legislature, 9 had for their object the aid and encouragement of education. One of these acts established the University of the Philippines, and the first act to be passed or considered by the Assembly was one appropriating 1,000,000 pesos to aid in the construction of "barrio" or hamlet school houses.

It is this fine spirit and eager desire for schools that has made the work of the American educator in the Philippines a comparatively simple problem. The work has grown under his hands with great rapidity and its extension has been limited by only one thing, the inadequacy of the revenue provided by the government. The aim almost from the first, was to reach the entire Christian population with a complete system of primary and industrial schools. This object, which at first seemed a distant goal, has been nearly attained. Of the nearly 1200 "pueblos" or townships of the Spanish régime, probably not one is now without a well organized and carefully supervised system of public schools. Of the more than 12,000 barrios or villages in which the great mass of the population lives, probably not more than thirty per cent at the present time are without school privileges. Practically the entire population is being reached by instruction in the English language and the elements of literacy. Out of a population of perhaps 7,000,000, nearly 600,000 are in attendance upon public schools. The number of Filipino teachers, all of them trained by American teachers and giving their instruction in English is shown by reports for the last year to be 8210. All primary teaching is done by these Filipinos. The creation and training of this great corps of young native men and women, qualifying them as instructors in a foreign language, preparing them by normal courses, institutes, vacation schools and assemblies and by daily training classes to teach, not only the common primary branches, but industrial work,

hygiene, simple domestic science, local government and village improvement, gardening and agriculture is the most notable achievement of the Bureau of Education. All of the above branches are taught in the primary schools and the teaching is done by Filipino young men and women who have proven themselves equal to their tasks and responsive to the obligations of their profession.

Nearly 200 intermediate schools with vocational and specialized courses of three years carry further the work of the primary schools and the public school system is completed by some 40 high schools, one in each province, and by the newly established university.

Wherever one goes now in the Philippines, even in remote provinces and isolated hamlets he will find a troop of children filling the narrow streets or plaza, who can engage with him in ordinary English conversation, and whose thoughts and ideas have been quickened and raised far above the mental level of the illiterate and ignorant class from which these children spring. Such results are cumulative. A few more years may tell immensely in favor of general enlightenment, and to one who has watched the progress of ten years, the day seems close when the entire archipelago will be united by a common tongue and by a native journalism (already an active factor in the formation of public opinion) expressing itself in English and intelligible to every class and to every body of population.

The social consequences of this public instruction promise to be very striking. The Filipino people have made in the last hundred years some remarkable advances in civilization and in culture, but these advantages have hitherto been confined to a small class of the population—only a few families in each town. Now a great middle class is forming. It already controls education through the teachers who in large part are from middle class families. It is gaining control of the civil service through the system of competitive examinations. The new forms of industry, railroading, telegraphs and telephones, mail service, commercial business—all are filled by the class of young people educated in public schools since the American occupation. The types of

professional man and woman, physician, engineer and nurse are all being changed by the young force pressing upward from the poor and unlettered masses through the public schools. Nor are the agricultural peasantry remaining unaffected. The institutions of "bonded debt" and "caciquismo," which have blighted the social progress of the barrio people, are being undermined. These rural classes are no longer completely subservient, as they were ten years ago, to a dominant proprietary class which exploited them. Thrift and economy will come with knowledge of accounts, savings banks and independent production taught in the primary schools.

It is still too early to observe the direct effects of this system of education upon the great experiment of representative government which is being tried in the Philippines. This modern principle (not yet fully established among European peoples) now runs through all the political institutions of the Philippines. The municipal councils and presidents are elective, so are two of the three members of the provincial boards, including the provincial governor, and so is the Philippine Assembly which now, with the Philippine Commission, is the supreme legislative body in the islands. Suffrage is still restricted, only about 150,000 electors in a population of 7,000,000. But one of the qualifications by which the franchise is obtainable is a knowledge of the English language, and while the voting age is high (twenty-three), in less than a decade the majority of electors will be young men who have qualified for political activity through their education in the primary schools, and these young men will hold the future of democracy and representative government in their power.

The consequences that are involved in the success or failure of America's great experiment in native government, would alone justify all the emphasis that can be placed upon the education of the Filipino. Judging from the attitude of those young men who have already attained the franchise through the schools, it may be supposed that the coming Filipino electorate is going to be far more alert, more critical of mistakes, and more impatient of restrictions and of

arbitrary government than the generation of Filipinos who first opposed and at last coöperated in the establishment of American government. These young men are going to make the task of future governors general of the Philippines increasingly difficult, unless these officials be men fully in sympathy with native development and resolute to guard its every privilege and opportunity. Their appearance in political life will mean the final passing of the standards of political conduct inherited from the Spanish régime, the end of those vestiges of arbitrary and irresponsible authority that still tempt the American official from the straight path of his legal powers; it will mean the disuse of Spanish in courts and legislature, in schools and popular journalism. It will mean the actual extension to the soil of Malaysia, of the principles of American government and civil liberty.

In view of all the circumstances the greatest task before the American educator in the Philippines is the training of Filipinos for leadership. The schools have undertaken a wide scope of activities. They have revived native arts and industries and are teaching them in the primary schools; they have provided shops, laboratories and facilities for industrial training that probably cannot be paralleled in any state in America; they have taken up the campaign against disease and epidemic and are diffusing a knowledge of sanitation and nursing throughout the archipelago. These are important practical ends, but they are less important than to give to the Filipino people leaders who will be equal to the tasks and trials which lie before them. Industrial progress, triumph over plague, general well-being—all these (though with immense difficulty) might be realized without education, but moral and political leadership, never. Civilized mankind has always been controlled and directed by his scholarly class; he always will be and no backward people can hope to participate in the control of their own destinies or to make their progress truly and fundamentally their own, until trained and disciplined leaders of their own race and kind exist in sufficient numbers to make them capable of self direction. It is this that makes the forty or more secondary schools of the Philippines such important factors in the edu-

cation of the islands and justifies the comparatively large expenditures for their equipment and conduct. This justifies also the liberal and humanistic courses which are offered in these schools together with the training in science and vocational branches that are allowed to the option of the student. Anyone who has considered deeply the needs of the Filipino people will see that the greatest need is for an upright and broadly educated leadership. The responsibilities which our liberal policy has trusted to them are enormous; they may be productive of an influence and benefit that will far surpass the boundaries of the Philippines or of Malaysia, or they may end in complete disappointment, and retard the progress of the races toward a better understanding and a higher respect for one another. At present political and social leadership is in the hands of a small class, really a few individuals in each province, who had the advantages of higher Spanish education. These men have been an indispensable element in the inauguration of the present government of their country and future generations will regard them with gratitude, but at its best their education was superficial and illiberal and wholly inadequate for the generation of men to whom must be entrusted the future of the Philippines. This generation cannot have too liberal a culture. It cannot know too much of the history of the race, of the spirit of the western civilization which it participates in but imperfectly understands.

The rather common criticism that is directed against the higher education of the Filipino and its so called "unpractical" character would still probably agree that the present leaders of the Filipino people are not an over-informed and over-disciplined class, and that the future leadership should not be less cultivated, less informed and less mentally disciplined.

Perhaps enough has been said to indicate the importance of public instruction in the American ideal of colonial government, as that ideal was expressed by those who laid the foundations of our policy in the Orient. This is the original element in America's attempt to do for a dependent people what has not been done before. It is its distinctive feature

and if our example is to have value for other colonial peoples, it will be in the complete success of the system of schools. Commercial exploitation, industrial development, the advantage to large capitalized undertakings of having a free hand among subject people—these things have been demonstrated elsewhere. Their success may be measured in a vast number of undertakings in the tropics and up and down Western Asia. The world will receive no new ideas, the problems of relationship between our own and other races will not be clarified by any mere economic success of America in the Philippines, because it will be but a repetition of what has been equally well done elsewhere. It will be but following a European leading which already promises to end in inadequacy and disaster. This view needs fresh realization because of the recent trend of the administration in the Philippines. The early emphasis on education by American officials has not been sustained by those who have succeeded to the task of helping on the progress of the Filipinos. Mr. Taft was exceedingly concerned about the educational plan; he placed it first and gave it his confidence and support. But since his retirement the islands have never had a governor general who was especially interested in education or willing to maintain its large plans. Education has succeeded in the Philippines because of its strength as a moral force—it has been insistently advocated by the Filipinos—not because of any marked support of the Commission. What has been done since 1903, has been done in spite of very inadequate financial means, and the refusal of the government to add 30 per cent to the revenues for education is alone responsible for the failure to make the educational organization complete for the Archipelago. At the present time the revenues of the government promise to have a great augmentation through the rapid growth of foreign commerce and internal production. Now ought to be the time to appropriate generously for schools, to raise the meagre compensation of the native teachers, to place a school within the reach of every settlement and afford the means to accomplish the great objects which the Bureau of Education has consistently struggled for, namely, the enlightenment of a whole people,

the elimination of illiteracy, ignorance, credulity and helplessness, and the complete diffusion of the English tongue. All this could be done, now, with proper support, in a short term of years. But unfortunately for the prospects of complete success the attitude of the present administration is not sympathetic to such an achievement. In his inaugural address, last November, Governor General Forbes, after emphasizing the importance of practically every material effort of the administration and promising it his support, spoke as follows of public instruction: "The thought is grievous that any boy or girl in the Philippine Islands wanting to get an education should be unable to do so because of failure of the government to provide facilities—and yet the resources of the islands have not developed to a point where I feel that we are justified in largely increasing the appropriation for education. The amount of education which we shall be able to accomplish in ten years will be very much greater if we devote our first money towards increasing the wealth of the people and later use the resulting increase of revenue for extending our educational facilities." This is fallacy. It is paternalism. It is insisting upon doing for a people instead of fitting them to do for themselves. Where is there an example of a nation which has grown great in spiritual achievement, in the accomplishments that dignify life and make it generous, and in the self-control and wisdom that make states just and effective, by placing first its material concerns? Ideals must have a place. The aims of a people must be set higher than this. No state can be established by bread alone.

Practically that general well-being which everyone must regard as the object of our efforts in the Philippines cannot come by purely economic effort. Enlarged production is not so difficult, but the problem of distribution will not arrange itself under the operation of natural laws. For the peasant to profit and to share in that widening of prosperity which all hope is at hand, he must be made literate, able to keep accounts, instructed in his rights—freed. This is the work of the schools, and it will not be accomplished until the schools reach the entire population. To postpone that day to

some future time when the coffers of the government shall overflow, is to postpone the chances of the great majority of natives until their opportunities are gone.